

DISCOURSE OF POPE PIUS XI TO THE SPANISH REFUGEES

THE SPANISH WARNING

G. M. GODDEN

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BLOOD, FIRE AND RUIN IN SPAIN

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Discourse of His Holiness Pope Pius XI to the Spanish Refugees

Address delivered by Pope Pius XI on September 14, 1936, to the 600 Spanish refugees, bishops, priests and laymen whom he received in audience at Castel Gandolfo.

YOUR presence here, beloved sons and exiles of Spain, of a Spain so dear to Us and now so desolate, fills Our heart with an utterly inexpressible tumult of afflicting and conflicting feelings and emotions. Now We would weep for the bitterness which afflicts Our hearts; again We would rejoice for the sweet and proud joy which consoles Us and makes Us jubilant. You are here, beloved sons, to tell Us of the great tribulation from which you came. Of that tribulation you bear on your person and possessions the signs and visible marks. These are signs and marks of the great battle of suffering which you have borne and which make you a spectacle before Our eyes and before the eyes of all the world.

You have been robbed and despoiled of all things. You have been hunted and set upon to death in cities and in villages, in the dwellings of men and in the solitudes of the mountain tops. It is just as the Apostle saw the first martyrs and his admiration and exultation at seeing them called forth those proud and magnificent words which he cast in the face of the world and which declared the world unworthy of them: Of whom the world was not worthy. You have come to tell Us of your joy in having been found worthy like the first Apostle to suffer for the name of Jesus, and of your happiness, like that once praised by the first Pope. You have been covered with reproaches in the name of Jesus and because you were Christians. What would He say, what can We say to praise you, venerated bishops and priests, persecuted and wronged in your character as ministers of Christ and dispensers of the mysteries of God?

HEROISM AND MARTYRDOM

These praises are of men in Christian and priestly virtue, of heroism and martyrdom, of martyrdom in the full, sacred and glorious meaning of the word, of the sacrifice of lives the most innocent, of those venerable with age, of youth in its first flower, of many so bold and generous as to ask for a

place among the victims who were being carried to where the executioners were awaiting them. It is in this superhuman light that We see you and in which We proclaim to you the sacred and reverent admiration of all and even of those who do not possess our faith but who have some sense of human dignity and greatness; for in that faith, beloved sons, is to be found the secret and divine power which for twenty centuries has been enkindling and feeding that flame.

Beloved sons, you have stirred the admiration of all but especially of Us, for to Us has been communicated by the Supreme Father of all an all-embracing fatherhood and in virtue of that fatherhood, We may and We must apply to Ourselves that beautiful and divine expression: "A wise son maketh a father joyful." We embrace with Our gaze and with Our heart you and all your fellow sufferers in tribulation and in martyrdom and again We must say to you as the Apostle to your earliest predecessors in the glory of martyrdom: "My joy and My crown"; and not merely mine, but that of God Himself, for according to the glad and glorious vision of the great Prophet with His grace there has been made by His hand of each one of you a crown of glory and a royal diadem. And thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

What a splendid reparation is this of yours, beloved sons, which you have offered and continue to offer to that Divine Majesty which in so many parts of the world and even in Spain by so many is unrecognized, denied, blasphemed, and in a thousand ways brutally offended. How timely, how providential and how pleasing to God is your reparation of fealty, of honor and of glory in these our own days in which it has been given to hear the new and horrifying cries of the Godless and enemies of God.

WITNESSES AND VICTIMS

But all these shining rays of heroism and glory which you, beloved sons, offer and recall to Us, make Us see all the more inevitably and clearly as in a great apocalyptic vision the wreck and ruin, the profanation and havoc of which you have been not merely the witnesses, but the victims. All that is most humanly human, all that is most divinely divine, consecrated persons and sacred things and holy

institutions, inestimable and irreplaceable treasures of faith and Christian piety as well as of culture and of art, the most precious antiquities, the holiest of relics, dignity, sanctity, the fruitful activity of lives wholly dedicated to religion, to science and to charity, the highest members of the sacred Hierarchy, bishops and priests, consecrated virgins, the laity of every class and condition, venerable gray hairs and the first flower of youth, the very silence so sacred and so solemn of the tomb—all have been assaulted, violated, destroyed and in the most ruthless and barbarous ways, in an unbridled and unparalleled confusion of forces so savage and so cruel as to have been thought utterly impossible for human dignity, let alone for human nature, even the most miserable and debased.

And louder than all this confusion and this clash of unrestrained violence passing through these burnings and massacres, a voice is heard proclaiming to the world a truly horrifying story. Brothers have murdered brothers. Civil war—war between the sons of a common country, of a common people, of a common fatherland. God knows that war, even in the least tragic of circumstances, is always something so fearful and so inhuman, man seeking man to kill and to kill as many as possible, to destroy persons and property and with means increasingly fatally effective. But what is to be said when war is fratricidal? It has been well said that the blood of a single man shed by the hand of his brother is more than enough for all time and for the whole earth.

What is to be said when we are face to face with the stories of brothers killing brothers, which are daily being told? Above the bond of humanity and fatherland there is a brotherhood which is an infinitely more sacred and more precious brotherhood, which makes us one in Christ, our Redeemer, in the sonship of the Catholic Church which is the Mystical Body of Christ Himself, the treasury and fullness of all that our Redemption has brought us. And it is precisely this sublime brotherhood which made Spain Christian but which in the present calamity has had particularly to suffer and which continues to suffer.

PROPAGANDA OF HATRED

It can only be said that a satanic preparation has highlighted, and that more fiercely in neighboring Spain, that

flame of hatred and savage persecution which has been confessedly reserved for the Catholic Church and the Catholic religion as being the one real obstacle in the way of those forces which have already given a sample and a measure of themselves in subversive attacks on every kind of order from Russia to China, from Mexico to South America.

Such trials and preparations have been preceded and unfailingly accompanied by a universal, persistent and most astute propaganda, intent on subjecting the whole world to those absurd and disastrous ideologies which once they have seduced and stirred up the masses, aim at nothing less than arming them and throwing them madly against every form of institution, human and divine.

And how can this awful consummation fail to be inevitable, and that in the most aggravated conditions and proportion, if out of false calculation and self-interest and because of ruinous rivalry and the egoistic pursuit of particular supremacy, those who have a duty in the matter do not hasten to repair the breach, if indeed it is not already too late?

We who share in that universal divine fatherhood which embraces all souls created by one God and destined for God and by the blood of the same God redeemed, We who share this fatherhood which adds to human solidarity such new and sublime bonds and duties, We cannot but give expression once more and particularly in this gathering which your presence here, beloved sons, has rendered so solemn and so moving by reason of the sacredness of your suffering—to all the anguish of a father's heart. We must bewail not merely such evils and disasters in general, but more in particular such fratricidal carnage, so many offenses to Christian life and dignity, such a ruining of the most sacred and precious heritage of a great and virile people and of a people so singularly dear to Us. But, beloved sons, the doings which your presence brings so vividly to mind are something more than a mere succession, however impressive, of devastations and disaster. They are likewise a school in which the most serious lessons are being taught to Europe and the whole world—to a world now at last wholly steeped in, ensnared and threatened by subversive propaganda and more especially to a Europe battered and shaken to its very foundations.

ALL CULTURE MENACED

These tragic happenings in Spain speak to Europe and the whole world and proclaim once more to what extent the very foundations of all order, of all culture, of all civilization are being menaced. This menace, it must be added, is all the more serious, more persistent, more active, by reason of a profound ignorance and a disclaiming of the truth, by reason of the truly satanic hatred against God and against humanity redeemed by Him, all that concerns religion and the Catholic Church. This point has so often been admitted and as We just observed, openly confessed, that it is superfluous for Us to insist on the matter further, and now less than ever when the events of Spain have spoken with such appalling eloquence.

It is not superfluous, on the other hand, but rather it is opportune and even necessary, and for Us a duty, to warn all against the insidiousness with which the heralds of the forces of subversion are seeking to find some common ground for a possible approach and collaboration on the part of Catholics, and this on the basis of a distinction between ideology and application, between ideas and action, between the economic and moral order. This insidiousness is dangerous in the extreme and its purpose is purely and simply to deceive and disarm Europe and the world in favor of an unchanging program of hate, subversion and destruction by which they are being threatened.

Another truth is this, that with this renewed revelation and open confession of that privileged hate for religion and the Catholic Church so lamentably obvious in Spain, a further lesson is being offered to Europe and the world, a lesson precious and highly salutary for all who do not care to close their eyes and grope in the dark. Now, at last, it is certain and manifestly obvious from the very confession of these forces of subversion which are threatening everything and everybody that the one real obstacle in their way is Christian teaching and the consistent practice of Christian living as these are taught and enjoyed by the Catholic religion and the Catholic Church. This is to say it is certain and evident that wherever war is being made on religion and the Catholic Church and her beneficent influence on the individual, on the family, on the mass of the people, that war is in alli-

ance with the forces of subversion, by these same forces and for the same disastrous purpose.

This is to say that wherever and with whatever means, insidious or violent, according to circumstances, and with whatever fictitious and insincere distinction between the Catholic religion and "religious politics," difficulties, obstacles and barriers are placed in the way of the full development of the action and influence of the Catholic religion and the Catholic Church, with its divine mandate and authority, precisely to that extent there is aided and abetted the influence and the pernicious action of the forces of subversion.

This is not the first time that We have set forth these very grave considerations and have recommended them to all, particularly to those in positions of responsibility. We have wished to profit by your presence here to renew these recommendations and that in a moment so critical in the history of Europe and of the world and in which We Ourselves are now so near our day of final reckoning. In this matter, there is no testimony more authoritative, beloved sons, than yours, because you in your persons and in what you hold most dear, your fatherland, have experienced the evils and disasters which are threatening us all.

CHURCH TEACHINGS

It has been recently asserted that the Catholic Church and the Catholic religion have shown themselves unprepared and ineffective in the face of such evils and disasters and the example of Spain, and not merely Spain, has been urged in proof of this. Very much to the point in this matter is a reflection of Alessandro Manzoni: "There is no need to have recourse to example to justify the Church. It is enough to look at her teachings."

The observation is no less obvious than solid and profound. Give us in fact a society in which there is a genuinely free and untrammelled opportunity for the teachings which the Church and the Catholic religion unfailingly teach and inculcate with the force of law, of essential directions as being willed by God and controlled and sanctioned by God, as a guide for individual conduct and dignity, for private, public, social and professional justice and for the sanctity of the family; teachings on the origin and exercise of authority in other spheres, on human brotherhood lifted to divine level in

Christ and His Mystical Body, the Church, and on the dignity of labor regarded as a divine undertaking of expiation and redemption, looking to inevitable and assured rewards; teachings on the obligations of mutual charity of which the sole rule and criterion is the good and the need of our neighbor, as these are felt and measured by a love which can have no bounds because it is like the love to which God Himself has a right. Give us a society in which there is a full and undisputed influence and authority of those teachings and of those other principles, theoretical and practical, organically related to those teachings as premises for legitimate conclusions or imperative applications, and we ask how and by what means can the Church and the Catholic religion make a greater or better contribution to the reawakening, whether of the individual or of the family or of society.

The Church and religion do in fact something more and something better, for they offer and provide to every one of good will the means which make it possible to derive from those teachings and those principles the whole of that practical good of which they contain the secret and the generative power, for they offer divine grace, and the instruments and vehicles of grace, prayer, the sacraments and Christian life.

NEGLIGENCE AND INERTIA

There will always be, of course, the fearful possibilities of negligence, of inertia, of resistance, of opposition, all of which have their source in human liberty and thus how many sad affairs may be explained and traced to their source without involving the least shadow of complicity on the part of the Church and the Catholic religion, but rather revealing a full and persistent contradiction with and opposition to all the things which they teach and try to make effective in every way possible to them; that is, by teaching, by translating teachings into lives lived in a Christian manner.

There are other explanations and sources for that which they would attribute to the insufficiency and ineffectiveness of the Catholic Church and the Catholic religion, and to these we cannot but make at least a passing allusion. What can the Catholic Church do but deplore and protest and beseech whenever and wherever contradictions and hindrances are met at every step taken in regard to youth, to the family, to the people; that is to say, precisely in those spheres that

have the most need of the presence and action of this Mother and Mistress? What else can the Catholic Church do in times and places which seek to confine to the church and pulpit, the Catholic press, which is designed for the diffusion, exposition and defense of those genuinely Christian teachings of which the Catholic Church is the sole guardian; the authentic and integral Christianity which it alone possesses and proclaims?

The Catholic press is persistently suspected and increasingly hampered, while every freedom and favor, or at least complete toleration, is shown to that press whose mission and purpose, it would seem, is to spread confusion among ideas, to mislead by falsifying facts, to bring the Church into suspicion and to discredit economical persons and things, Catholic teachings and institutions; a press that does not hesitate to proclaim a new Christianity and a new religion of a new coinage. And again, how hampered and paralyzed is the beneficent influence and action of the Catholic Church and religion by all those obstacles which make all but impossible the practice of Christian living and the fulfilment of duties which the Church imposes to nourish the inner and spiritual life; by that unceasing and dizzying swell of contemporary life which carries away into the turmoil of exterior and material things, the youth of today and not the youth alone; still more and what is worse, that general wave of immorality which more and more is breaking down every restraint of law and which seems already to have quenched in so many souls every sense of modesty and dignity, of conscience and responsibility by reason of the great scandals which are given and suffered.

HEAVY RESPONSIBILITY

But sin maketh nations miserable and certainly a heavy and formidable responsibility lies on all those who by reason of and in proportion to the public character of their office fail to oppose to these great evils every remedy and barrier that is possible. We know only too well that there are many other grave obstacles in the various fields of public, private, collective and individual life which are opposed to the full efficacy of the influence and action of the Catholic religion and Church.

We must, however, content Ourselves with the indication

We have just set forth in order not to delay any further that fatherly and Apostolic Benediction which you have come to ask of the common father of your souls, of the Vicar of Christ, a Benediction, beloved sons, which you are longing to receive and which your father is longing to impart, a Benediction which you have more than merited.

And like you, We, too, have willed and so disposed that Our voice in Benediction should reach far and wide to all your brothers in suffering and exile, who have wanted, but in vain, to be here with you today. We know how widely they are scattered; but no doubt even in this there is a disposition of Divine Providence aiming at much good.

Providence has willed you to be in many places, scattered far and wide, so that you, who bear the marks of the tragic events which have afflicted you and your dear Spain and Ours, might bear personal and living testimony of this heroic attachment to the faith of your fathers, to a faith which by hundreds and thousands has added confessors and martyrs—and in that glorious legion you are numbered—to the already glorious martyrology of the Church of Spain. This heroic attachment—and this We learn with inexpressible consolation—has been the occasion for an impressive renewal of devotion and for such wide and deep awakening of Christian life and piety, particularly among the good, simple people of Spain, and heralds the dawn and beginning of better things and fairer days for the whole of Spain.

BENEDICTION FOR SPAIN

To all this good and faithful people, to all this dear and noble Spain, which has suffered so much, We direct Our Benediction and We desire that it may reach them; and to them no less Our daily prayer goes out and will continue to go out until fair peace wholly and finally returns.

Our Benediction, above any mundane consideration, goes out in a special manner to all those who have assumed the difficult and dangerous task of defending and restoring the rights and honor of God and of religion, which is to say the rights and dignity of conscience, the prime condition and the most solid basis for all human and civil welfare.

This task, We have said, is both difficult and dangerous, for it is only too easy for the very ardor and difficulty of defense to go to an excess which is not wholly warranted.

And further, intentions less pure, selfish interests and mere party feeling may easily enter into, cloud and change the morality and responsibility for what is being done. Our fatherly heart can never forget, and in this moment more than ever it must recall, with the most sincere and fatherly gratitude, all those who with purity of intention and unselfish motive have sought to intervene in the name of humanity. And Our gratitude is not diminished, even though We have had to realize the failure of their local efforts.

And what of the others? What is to be said of all those others who also are so near and never cease to be Our sons, in spite of the deeds and methods of persecution so odious and so cruel against persons and things to Us so dear and sacred? What of those who as far as distance permitted have not even spared Our person and who with expression and gestures so highly offensive have treated Us not as sons with a father but as foes with an enemy who is particularly detested? We have, beloved sons, divine precepts and examples which may seem too difficult for poor and unaided human nature to obey and imitate, but which are in reality, with divine grace, beautiful and attractive to the Christian soul, to your souls, beloved sons.

PRAYER FOR ENEMIES

So that We cannot and could not for one moment doubt as to what is left for Us to do—to love them and to love them with a special love born of mercy and compassion; to love them and, since We can do nothing else, to pray for them; to pray that the serene vision of truth will illuminate their minds and will reopen their hearts to the desire and fraternal quest for the real common good; to pray that they may return to the Father who awaits them with such longing and will make a joyous festival of their return; to pray that they may be one with Us.

Of this We have full confidence in Almighty God, the rainbow of peace will shine forth in the clear sky of Spain, bearing the news of peace to the whole of your great and splendid country; a peace, let Us add, serene and secure, consoling all sorrows, repairing all harm, contenting every just and wise aspiration, which is compatible with the common good and heralding a future order with tranquility and prosperity with honor.

The Spanish Warning

G. M. GODDEN

Reprinted from the Irish Rosary in the issue of September, 1936.

SUPPORTERS of "United Fronts," whether in Ireland, in England, in France, or in Spain, will find a useful object lesson in the events in Spain since the third week of July. The Spanish *Freute Popular* assumed all power this year in Spain, after the elections held in the middle of February, and it was announced in March that the Young Communist and Young Socialist Leagues in Spain were to fuse into "one united mass revolutionary youth organization, sympathetically affiliated to the Young Communist International" (*Daily Worker*, April 4, 1936). In this same month one of the first acts of the new *Freute Popular*, that is the *United Front* Government, was to release from prison 30,000 prisoners, the greater part of them district, union, or Communist cell ringleaders.

Early in March many towns in Spain were suffering from disorders, rioting and arson. By the end of March a correspondent from Madrid wrote:

A Spaniard's flat may be entered and wrecked intentionally or mistakenly by passing demonstrators, and he may be praying at a shrine and suddenly be ordered, at the pistol point, to cease his devotions and flee. . . . If he is a cattle breeder he may find peasants ploughing his pasturage one fine morning, because a neighboring *Casa del Pueblo* has told him to go ahead. If a shopkeeper, his establishment may be pillaged or burnt down because his political preferences are not liked, or because somebody has denounced him to a secret committee. He may be shot down by a gunman, some hired assassin, or merely a political enthusiast emboldened by the knowledge that he has nine chances out of ten of escaping unmolested, and a tenth chance of being pardoned eventually. Or he may be imprisoned for a long period merely under suspicion (*Times*, March 26, 1936).

It would appear that Sr. Sotelo, the leader who was himself to fall a victim to the assassin's bullets, the murderers being members of the *Freute Popular* police force, was justified when he warned Spain that after a victory in

the February elections for the United Front "there would wave over Spain the Red flag, the symbol of the destruction of Spain's past, her ideals, and her honor." The above description from Madrid, of life under the Red flag of the *Freute Popular*, might stand, sentence for sentence, for a description of life in Leningrad or in Moscow under the Red flag of the Government of Lenin and Stalin. It is a condition entirely favorable to the work of the Communist International; and that amazingly efficient organization was not slow in perceiving its opportunity.

Early in April some thirty Communists left Moscow for Spain. They were largely young Spaniards, who had spent periods varying from six to eighteen months in Soviet Russia, undergoing training in revolutionary practice. Prominent members of the Executive Committees of the Communist International and of the Red International of Labor Unions gave them a send off, and exhorted these young missionaries of Bolshevism to follow up the recent successes in Spain by applying the methods they had been studying in Soviet Russia. It is interesting to note that the Executive Committee of the Communist International, sitting in Moscow, was occupied in April in laying down lines for immediate action in Spain, including the confiscation of land and other property belonging to the Church: "The churches, monasteries, and Jesuits must be stripped of their wealth and discredited in the eyes of the people." Nationalist aspirations were also to be satisfied by granting immediate independence to Catalans, Basques, and Galicians; Moscow understands perfectly how to apply the policy of "divide and conquer."

The months of March and April in Spain saw abundant fruits of the pure doctrine of Moscow put into "immediate action." Catholic schools were closed "by the will of the people." Smoking ruins of great churches and of humble hermitages sent up their incense of martyrdom. In Elche the priceless figures and accessories of the Elche mystery play were burnt; and three churches and a Convent of the Poor Clares went up in smoke. Never again will the Elche mystery be seen, that mystery "so beautiful in itself and in its intention . . . a spectacle worth going to Spain to see." At Huebla the parish church was fired, and the organ, one of the oldest and largest in the world, was destroyed. The

White Cross of Granada was smashed to atoms. At Cadiz four churches and six convents or schools were set on fire or sacked, statues being thrown into the streets. At Logrono, it was reported, two churches and four convents were looted. In Madrid three churches were set on fire. By the middle of April a list was presented to the Spanish Parliament of 106 churches set on fire, of which fifty-six were completely destroyed. In May it was reported in Parliament that no less than nine churches and schools were set on fire, in Madrid, on May 4th; and it was stated that nuns had been assaulted in the streets. Three months of *Freute Popular* government certainly justified the comment: "Bolshevism has been trying a new weapon in Spain. That weapon is the 'United Front.' Its success has surprised even its inventors. . . . This new Bolshevist policy of the 'United Front' has put Spain at the mercy of 3,000,000 Socialists, Anarchists, Syndicalists, and Communists."

Meanwhile, during the fatal Spring months, what were the Communist comments on events in Spain? In February the Anarchist Trade Unions in the Spanish industrial area of Catalonia voted for "Revolutionary Unity" with the Socialist Trade Union Federation of Spain. This achievement was announced in the Communist *Daily Worker* as "Spanish Step to Unity." In March the same Communist organ told its English readers that 60,000 agricultural workers, "led by a Commission of Communist deputies," had taken over the entire Spanish province of Badajoz, and that "everywhere throughout Spain the Red Flag is making a triumphal appearance" (*Daily Worker*, February 4, 1936, and April 3, 1936). Will our readers please note that, when if ever a "United Front" government should rule in Ireland, it is *not* the Irish flag, but the Red flag of International Atheist Communism that will make its "triumphal appearance" throughout Ireland. In April the *Daily Worker* was declaring that "News from Spain gets bigger and better. . . . Nothing like it has been seen in Western Europe before. . . . Spain moves forward towards the free, prosperous and peaceful Workers' Republic" (*Daily Worker*, April 20, 1936). Two months later this was the report, given to the Spanish Parliament, of the condition of the "bigger and better" Spain, that Spain "prosperous and peaceful," promised by the architects of the Spanish United Front:

- 160 churches totally destroyed.
- 251 churches damaged by fire and assault.
- 28 towns with churches closed by the Mayors.
- 69 Catholic centers destroyed.
- 113 general strikes.
- 228 partial strikes.
- 10 newspaper offices destroyed.
- 1,556 persons killed and wounded.

One item of the Communist claim has certainly been justified in the four months, from February to June, of the Spanish United Front, the *Freute Popular*, Government—"Nothing like it has been seen in Western Europe before."

It did not need an expert in political history to realize that Spain was heading straight for the natural outcome of the so-called "United Front" policy, Civil War. When the national uprising of the true Spain came, in July, the acts of the supporters of the "peaceful Workers' Republic" showed very conclusively, to the whole world, what manner of men and women had been attempting to seize control over Spain.

Here are a very few instances, selected from accounts of eyewitnesses, and responsible correspondents. The first weapons used by the United Front Government when the civil war broke out, were an authorization to the Labor Unions to call general strikes, together with a mobilization of the "Marxist Militia," not, be it noticed, a National or Spanish Militia. The first broadcast to be issued by the "liberator" forces concluded "Spain is saved. Long live Spain"; the men who sent that message over their country would have no use for a "Marxist Militia." The crew of the battleship *Jaime Primero* mutinied on the high seas, and on wireless instructions from Madrid, killed the captain, the two other officers and seven sailors and threw the bodies overboard, thus following precisely the example set to all sailors of all countries in the famous Bolshevik film "Battleship Potemkin," a film which has been shown to the workers and intellectuals of two hemispheres. The film journal *Close Up* described how "Battleship Potemkin" had even been shown in the smallest and cheapest of the cinemas in the Argentine seaports, where "it must have been seen by every worker of every nationality, by every sailor ashore. It was amusing to hear the unanimous applause as officer after officer on the *Potemkin* was set upon and hurled overboard."

That was written in 1930. Communist propagandists take long views; and are quite content when Spanish sailors hurl their officers overboard in 1936.

On the third day of the fighting a reign of terror was reported from Madrid, which was not surprising, as the United Front Government, destined to bring peace and prosperity, was issuing army rifles and ammunition to anyone who would use them on the side of the *Freute Popular*. In Malaga hotels were sacked, and the main shopping center (by way of increasing prosperity?) was razed to the ground. The "initial successes" of the United Front at Barcelona were promptly followed by what an eyewitness described as "widespread burning of churches." The eyewitness, proceeding from Barcelona to the French frontier, wrote: "Everywhere they (the United Front Government supporters) were burning churches. At Vich, seat of a Bishopric, we were told that some forty churches, chapels, and convents were destroyed, including the Cathedral. At Barcelona itself every church in the city except the Cathedral was fired; the twelfth century church of Santa Ana and the fourteenth century church of Santa Maria del Mar were destroyed; in one church a priest was burnt alive; three Jesuit Fathers were beheaded, their heads being carried through the streets on salvers; nuns were stripped of their clothes and thrown into the streets. The mob paraded the streets of the town wearing the robes of ecclesiastical authorities. Hundreds of motor cars and lorries loaded with Government forces and civilians, bristling with revolvers, carbines, and machine guns, raced through the Barcelona streets, in those terrible days of July; and as their occupants raised their clenched fist in the Communist salute the crowd responded in like manner and laughed."

This same eyewitness concluded his record: "After night-fall I made my way through crooked streets to where the great church of Santa Maria del Mar was burning. After the Cathedral it is the largest church in Barcelona. Through its great porch the blazing interior could be seen. Flames licked through its rose window, and through openings in its towers, curling upward about them, and against the flames could be seen the silhouette of the statues adorning its façade. A small and nonchalant crowd of men, women and children stood about it."

To a Christian onlooker the spectacle of the great church in flames would be less terrible than that of the souls of these complacent onlookers, drugged with Marxist poison. The promoters of the "United Front" promised Spain peace and prosperity in a "Workers' Republic." The *Freute Popular* was indeed established; but its gifts to Spain are murder, arson, sacrilege, blasphemies, hunger, terror, complete breakdown of law and order, civil war. Into these things Spain found herself immersed before she realized what was happening. The sacrilege and horror of Barcelona has been repeated in town after town. "The people have been deceived by Soviet Agents," declared the liberators of Spain, "the people have been ignorant of what has been going on, on their doorstep."

Scenes of Blood, Fire and Ruin

Vatican broadcast on Spain reprinted from the Catholic Herald (London), in the issue of September 4, 1936.

THE press of all countries speaks daily of the atrocities committed by the Reds in Spain. Scenes of such horror and ferocity are a disgrace to humanity and to our civilization. Thus the world can see what is to be expected from those "Without God." But in the midst of these terrible scenes of blood and fire, devastation and ruin, it is well to turn our eyes to the splendid awakening of the religious spirit of the true Spanish people, an awakening so splendid that it has aroused the wonder of Catholics themselves. While in some places churches and convents are being burnt, in others crowds of people are to be seen praying for God's forgiveness and for the triumph of the cause of the good. While on the one hand priests and monks are being murdered, on the other their hands are publicly kissed in sign of respect and veneration. While on the one hand men are dying cursing God, on the other they die gloriously crying, "Long Live Christ, long live Spain."

REVIVAL OF RELIGION

Of this reflowering of the Catholic spirit in Spain under the present circumstances, we have testimony of indisputable value. They are authentic historical facts, which have oc-

curred here and there in the regions where the Catholic faith has remained most living, but also in those where it had been stifled by Communistic and atheistic propaganda—plan proof that this reflowering is general.

A lad of sixteen, about to leave his mother to go to the front to fight the Reds, told her: "Mama don't pray that I shan't die and that I shall come back. Pray that Communism may be destroyed and that the Lord shall no longer be offended in Spain. For this I willingly give my life." Nor is this an isolated case. On the contrary, the feelings expressed in the simple words of this lad of the people are those of thousands of his compatriots. Almost everywhere, those who take arms in defense of religion and of their country against the Reds have the same cry on their lips: "Religion before everything, then the rest." Many cases could be quoted of families which have given, willingly and joyfully, as many as five sons to fight for the Faith. Boys of fourteen and fifteen have stood out against their parents who tried to prevent them from going to fight, till they obtained their permission and blessing. Many of them have gone to return no more, struck down in the flower of their youth by the machine-guns of the enemy.

EXAMPLES OF SELF-SACRIFICE

A father with seven children when he went to enlist said: "I am appalled by the thought that these seven children may remain fatherless. But it is much worse for them to remain without the catechism." He fell a few days later, fighting valiantly against the Reds. Another worker, a widower and the father of four, shut up his little shop and entrusted his children to the neighbors, so that he might go to fight. Four sons, children of a widow, decided to go to the front to fight the Reds, but as they did not wish to leave their mother quite alone, one of them agreed to remain with her. The good woman, however, on hearing this, told him scornfully that she would not give him anything to eat if he dared to stop at home when his brothers were fighting for the Faith. "What a fine sight is that of all this youth, what gaiety is theirs," writes a correspondent from Pampeluna. "It is a pleasure to see them with their Sacred Heart badges, others with the Carmelite scapular, others with the medal of the Congregation of Mary. Twenty priests did not cease a

night from confessing. Many confessed outside on the pavement, or walking under the trees of the square, publicly kneeling down at the moment of absolution. All this has been like a strong injection of faith into the army that needed it."

"IT IS THE SOUL THAT MATTERS"

When men go to enlist, sayings are heard like the following: "Don't cry, Mama, don't cry because I am going. The body isn't worth anything, it is the soul that matters." At Salamanca all have recourse to God. The enthusiasm is indescribable. The churches are full, all are offering themselves as volunteers, even boys of fourteen and sixteen. A major to whom had been sent Sacred Heart medals for his soldiers, was most grateful, and said that people must pray much, that they at the front would do all they could, but that non-combatants must help them with prayer, for, as he said, "prayer not only comforts the spirit, but gives strength to the body." From Cadiz we hear: "Here there is a most consoling religious reaction. We hear cries in the street of 'Long Live Christ the King,' and 'Long Live Catholic Spain.'" In this very place where once so many evil words were uttered and the name of God was insulted and profaned, the Angelus is being rung, and it is a pleasure to see how the soldiers stand even in the street, reciting it, and people stop to say it with them. The day on which this practice was instituted, the General reminded his soldiers that it was a salutation to the Most Holy Virgin, and he explained how the practice was introduced. He himself recited it with the others, and many wept with emotion.

CROWDS FLOCKING TO COMMUNION

In Seville people and soldiers, not only in church, but on the streets, show their feelings of veneration and respect for the priests, and crowds take the Sacrament. A Red airplane, deceiving the people of Saragossa by flying the two-colored flag, passed over the city unmolested, dropping three bombs of 100 pounds weight each on the ancient church of Our Lady of the Pillar. Not one exploded. The people saw in this a new miracle of their patron. A grandiose procession was at once organized, and with all the religious, military and civil authorities at its head, set forth to thank

Our Lady of the Pillar. It numbered not less than 100,000 persons. In the church of Tribaldos in Murcia a professor was assassinated because he had always been a champion of the Catholic cause. A brother of the martyr thus gave the news to another brother: "Mother and our sister-in-law have borne this terrible grief with a truly admirable fortitude; do not worry about anything, for we are ready to suffer all that God sends us, since it is a real honor for the family to have a martyr, as our brother is, for having valorously defended the cause of Christ his whole life long." In Badajoz, at the triumphal entry of the victors, the churches filled with people to give thanks to the Lord for their liberation from so great a tyranny. Even in parts of Spain where the Red Terror rules, thousands of martyrs, as in the first centuries of the Church, die for Christ, but also many other heroic acts on the part of Christians show how, after twenty centuries, the Faith has the same invincible strength, even if its persecutors have become more ferocious than ever. The time will come when even these will have to cry "The Galilean has conquered."

Red Vandalism

Reprinted from America in the issue of October 3, 1936.

STRANGE it is that the patriotism of a people is often centered about its historic monuments which speak to them of their life story, of their conquests and sufferings. And so it seems to us that the Government forces in Spain committed a grave crime when a prepared mine blew up a section of the ancient Alcazar in Toledo on September 18th, with the purpose of dislodging the 1,200 men, who held the old fortress against every assault. The garrison evidently did not surrender because sad experience had taught them that guarantees of safety have been frequently violated in the ranks of the present Government. We have a feeling, too, that the destruction of the Alcazar was a contemptuous gesture at the old army, for the fortress was Spain's "West Point." But whatever the reason, we cannot but view the act as a serious blunder for the cause of the Reds. For the Alcazar stood as one of the oldest monuments in Spain, dating back even to Roman times. Here Alfonso VI hoisted his victorious flag after his triumph over the Moors in the siege of Toledo. Here lived the immortalized Cid as governor of the city. Naturally with the centuries it had been enlarged and embellished by such national heroes as Alfonso the Learned, Ferdinand and Isabella, Charles V, and Philip II. The Alcazar stands for everything that is glorious and sacred in the history of Spain's grandeur. Its destruction by the Government must certainly cause a reaction. A few weeks ago a company of Government troops discharged their guns against the massive statue of the Sacred Heart, erected in recent years by the contributions of the entire nation and solemnly dedicated by their ruler in the name of the Spanish race to Christ the King. The effect of such vandalism will be to cement the patriotic feelings of the entire people against these destructionists, who are trampling under foot their traditions, their rights, their monuments, their churches and their God.

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